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IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An endoscope container for high-pressure steam sterilization of an endoscope having a flexible insertion member, the endoscope container being stored in a high-pressure sterilizing device by having at least a part of ~~[[an]]~~ the insertion member of ~~[[an]]~~ the endoscope stowed in a curved state ~~bent to be stowed~~, the endoscope container comprising:

a tray serving as a housing and having a plurality of pores;

a lid member blocking an opening of the tray and having a plurality of pores; and

a positioning member, formed in at least one of the tray and lid member, ~~for positioning an~~ the positioning member being adapted to stow the insertion member of ~~[[an]]~~ the endoscope during the high-pressure steam sterilization ~~in order to stow the insertion member in the container in a state of having the insertion member bent~~ in a predetermined curved form, the curved form having at least a first bend radius corresponding to a distal portion of the insertion member and a second bend radius corresponding to a proximal portion of the insertion member, ~~the positioning member restricting bending of a predetermined portion of the insertion member so that a bend radius of a bending portion formed at the predetermined portion of the insertion member of the endoscope will be larger than a bend radius of other portions of the insertion member, the insertion member having a distal end provided with an observation window;~~

wherein the positioning member is formed such that the first bend radius corresponding to the distal portion of the insertion member is larger than the second bend radius corresponding to the proximal portion of the insertion member and the first bend radius corresponds to the distal portion which is 70cm or more in length as measured from a distal end of the insertion member ~~the predetermined portion is at least 70 cm of the distal portion of the~~

~~insertion member, and the positioning member restricts bending of the insertion member over a range of the at least 70 cm of the distal portion of the insertion member.~~

2. (Original) An endoscope container for high-pressure steam sterilization according to Claim 1, wherein said positioning member includes a concave predetermined portion part of said tray.

3. (Currently Amended) An endoscope container for high-pressure steam sterilization according to Claim 1, wherein said positioning member includes a curved wall that is formed on said lid member ~~to exhibit a bend radius larger than a bend radius the proximal portion of the insertion member exhibits when stowed in said endoscope container.~~

4-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously Presented) An endoscope container for high-pressure steam sterilization according to Claim 1, wherein said tray has a handle and a grip for facilitating carrying of said endoscope container.

9. (Currently Amended) An insertion member sheathing member for storage in a high-pressure sterilizing device by having at least a part of an flexible insertion member of an endoscope stowed in a curved state ~~bent to be stowed~~, the insertion member sheathing member comprising:

a hard pipe portion, which sheathes a predetermined portion at a distal end side of ~~[[an]]~~ the flexible insertion member of ~~[[an]]~~ the endoscope having the distal end side provided with an observation window and holds the predetermined portion in a predetermined curved form, the curved form having a first bend radius corresponding to the predetermined portion; and
a coil pipe portion that is flexible and sheathes a portion of a flexible tube portion

of the flexible insertion member, the flexible tube portion being proximal from the predetermined portion of the flexible insertion member, the flexible tube portion having a curved form having a second bend radius corresponding to the portion of the flexible tube portion of the flexible insertion member;

wherein the first bending radius is substantially larger than the second bend radius and the predetermined portion is 70cm or more in length as measured from the distal end side the predetermined portion is at least 70 cm of the distal end side of the insertion member, and the pipe portion restricts bending of the insertion member over a range of the at least 70 cm of the distal end side of the insertion member.

10. (Currently Amended) An endoscope container for high-pressure steam sterilization of an endoscope having a flexible insertion member, the endoscope container being stored in a high-pressure sterilizing device by having at least a part of ~~[[an]]~~ the flexible insertion member of ~~the~~ ~~[[an]]~~ endoscope stowed in a curved state ~~bent to be stowed~~, the endoscope container comprising:

a positioning member being adapted to stow the flexible insertion member of the endoscope during the high-pressure steam sterilization in a predetermined curved form, the curved form having at least a first bend radius corresponding to a distal portion of the flexible insertion member and a second bend radius corresponding to a proximal portion of the flexible insertion member, for restricting bending of at least a predetermined portion at a distal end of an insertion member of the endoscope having an observation window provided at the distal end so that a bend radius of the predetermined portion of the insertion member will be larger than the bend radius of other portions of the insertion member,

wherein the positioning member is formed such that the first bend radius

corresponding to the distal portion of the flexible insertion member is larger than the second bend radius corresponding to the proximal portion of the flexible insertion member and the first bend radius corresponds to the distal portion which is 70cm or more in length as measured from a distal end of the flexible insertion member—wherein the predetermined portion is at least 70 cm of the distal portion of the insertion member, and the positioning member restricts bending of the insertion member over a range of the at least 70 cm of the distal portion of the insertion member.

11. (Currently Amended) An endoscope container for high-pressure sterilization, the endoscope container being stored in a high-pressure sterilizing device by having at least a part of ~~[[an]]~~ a flexible insertion member of an endoscope stowed in a curved state bent to be stowed, the endoscope container comprising:

a tray provided with a plurality of pores through which high-pressure steam is led and having an opening for stowing an endoscope having an observation window provided at a distal end of a distal portion of ~~[[an]]~~ a flexible insertion member thereof which is inserted in a subject; and

a positioning member formed in the tray for positioning the endoscope in the tray, the positioning member being adapted to stow the flexible insertion member of the endoscope during the high-pressure steam sterilization in a predetermined curved form, the curved form having at least a first bend radius corresponding to the distal portion of the flexible insertion member and a second bend radius corresponding to a proximal portion of the flexible insertion member at least in the state of having the insertion member in part bent, the positioning member effecting the positioning to ensure that a predetermined portion of the insertion member is stowed in a substantially straight form or in a curved form that exhibits a bend radius larger than

~~the bend radius of a bent portion at the proximal end side proximal from the predetermined portion of the insertion member;~~

wherein the positioning member is formed such that the first bend radius is larger than the second bend radius, and said distal portion of the flexible insertion member is 70cm or more in length as measured from the distal end of the flexible insertion member ~~the predetermined portion is at least 70 cm of the distal portion of the insertion member, and the positioning member restricts bending of the insertion member over a range of the at least 70 cm of the distal portion of the insertion member.~~

12. (Currently Amended) An endoscope container for high-pressure sterilization according to Claim 11, wherein the positioning member effects the positioning to ensure that a distal portion of approximately 70 cm long of the flexible insertion member is stowed in a substantially straight form or in a curved form ~~that exhibits a larger bend radius than that at the proximal end of the insertion member.~~

13. (Currently Amended) An endoscope container for high-pressure sterilization according to Claim 12, wherein the positioning member effects the positioning to ensure that the distal portion of approximately 70 cm long of the flexible insertion member is stowed in a substantially straight form.

14. (Currently Amended) An endoscope container for high-pressure sterilization according to Claim 12, wherein the positioning member includes a concave part formed to stow the distal portion of approximately 70 cm long of the flexible insertion member.

15. (Currently Amended) An endoscope container for high-pressure sterilization, the endoscope container being stored in a high-pressure sterilizing device by having at least a

part of ~~[[an]]~~ a flexible insertion member of an endoscope stowed in a curved state bent to be
~~stowed~~, the endoscope container comprising:

a tray provided with a plurality of pores through which high-pressure steam is led
and having an opening for stowing an endoscope having an observation window provided at a
distal end of a distal portion of ~~[[an]]~~ a flexible insertion member thereof which is inserted in a
subject;

a lid member that blocks the opening of the tray, the lid member being provided
with a plurality of pores through which high-pressure steam is led into the container;

a positioning member formed in at least one of the tray and the lid member for
positioning the endoscope in the tray, the positioning member being adapted to stow the flexible
insertion member of the endoscope during the high-pressure steam sterilization in a
predetermined curved form, the curved form having at least a first bend radius corresponding to
the distal portion of the flexible insertion member and a second bend radius corresponding to a
proximal portion of the flexible insertion member at least in the state of having the insertion
member in part bent, the positioning member effecting the positioning to ensure that a
predetermined portion of the insertion member is stowed in a substantially straight form or in a
curved form that exhibits a bend radius larger than a bend radius of a bent portion at an end side
proximal from the predetermined portion of the insertion member;

wherein the positioning member is formed such that the first bend radius is larger
than the second bend radius, and said distal portion of the flexible insertion member is 70cm or
more in length as measured from the distal end of the flexible insertion member the
predetermined portion is at least 70 cm of the distal portion of the insertion member, and the

~~positioning member restricts bending of the insertion member over a range of the at least 70 cm of the distal portion of the insertion member.~~

16. (New) The endoscope container of claim 1, wherein the first bend radius has a substantially infinite radius.

17. (New) The endoscope container of claim 9, wherein the first bend radius has a substantially infinite radius.

18. (New) The endoscope container of claim 10, wherein the first bend radius has a substantially infinite radius.

19. (New) The endoscope container of claim 11, wherein the first bend radius has a substantially infinite radius.

20. (New) The endoscope container of claim 15, wherein the first bend radius has a substantially infinite radius.